



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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1984-85 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING FRAMEWORKS PROPOSED

Preliminary hunting regulations for ducks, geese, and other migratory game birds for the 1984-85 hunting season have been proposed by the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In line with a five-year study on stabilized waterfowl regulations, no major changes from last year's hunting regulations are being proposed at this time. The 1984-85 season represents the fifth year of that study.

Owing to substantial declines in the populations of cackling Canada geese and white-fronted geese in the Pacific Flyway, the proposed regulations would close the season on cackling Canada geese and further restrict, throughout their range in the United States, the harvest of Pacific Flyway white-fronted geese. This proposal reflects the results of consultations with representatives from Alaska, the Pacific Flyway Council, the California Department of Fish and Game, and other interested agencies, organizations and individuals.

In 1983, the Service initiated a program to further restrict the harvest of black ducks. This species has also suffered population declines and the proposed regulations would continue last year's restrictions.

The proposals, published in the March 23, Federal Register, describe tentative season frameworks, daily bag and possession limits, and shooting hours for migratory game birds in the contiguous United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Species discussed in the proposals include ducks, geese, brant, and swans; doves and pigeons; cranes; rails, coots, and gallinules; and woodcock and snipe.

Shooting hours will remain from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Framework dates for most duck and goose seasons will be from October 1, 1984, to January 20, 1985, for the Atlantic Flyway and from the Saturday nearest October 1, 1984, to January 20, 1985 for the Mississippi Flyway. For the Central and Pacific Flyways the dates will be from the Saturday nearest October 1, 1984 through the Sunday nearest January 20, 1985. The framework proposed for the Alaska waterfowl season extends from September 1, 1984, through January 26, 1985.

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All of the published proposals are subject to changes if the need is indicated by information obtained from surveys, State conservation agencies, and the public. Public comments on the proposals are invited through June 21, 1984, for Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; July 16, for other "early" seasons (those opening before October 1); and August 17 for the "late" seasons (those opening after October 1). Comments should be addressed to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

To ensure that the public has ample opportunity to comment on the proposals, two public hearings will be held to review the status of migratory game birds and consider proposed hunting regulations. The first hearing will pertain to "early" season regulations and will be held on June 21, 1984, at 9 a.m. in the Department of the Interior Auditorium on C Street between 18th and 19th Streets, N.W., in Washington, D.C. A second hearing on regulations for seasons opening on or after October 1 will be held on August 1, 1984, at 9 a.m., also in the Interior Department Auditorium. Persons wishing to participate in these hearings should write to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or telephone 202/254-3207. Those wishing to make statements should file copies with the Director before or during each hearing.